

# THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW



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# THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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# THE REFORMED THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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## Israel – A Theological Problem

The ecumenical Church has been confronted most forcibly once again in the last few years with the mighty issues dealt with by St. Paul in Romans 9-11. The question of the relationship of the Church to the Jews has become a live issue to a degree not felt for decades. The reason is that at the Evanston Assembly of 1954 a large number of delegates ran foul of the wording of a report in which the word "Israel" occurred. The question immediately called forth a minority declaration which brought the problem to the fore as a theological issue, and rendered it prominent in the discussions following the Evanston Assembly. But since any such sessional report could only be hurriedly prepared, and could not, in the nature of things, be a representative statement, in the year 1956, the International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews, along with the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, held a conference at Bossey, Switzerland, to go into the whole matter that had been raised. What then is this issue about which so much heat has been engendered?

When the worshipper in church today sings the Psalms of David, he finds that he is called upon to identify himself with a people known as "Israel": "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say, If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us . . ." (Ps. 124:1-3). Certain Near Eastern delegates to the conference pointed out the difficulty which confronts the Church in those Arab countries which lie next door to the modern state of Israel if uninstructed Christians are called upon to sing those words. For millions of people throughout the world the word "Israel" has a political connotation at the present juncture, since "Israel" is the name of a new state now occupying, as many insist, territory from which its citizens have dispossessed others. Amongst those thus dispossessed

are Arab Christians. The latter can thus hardly be expected to sing the 124th Psalm today with enthusiasm and understanding.

As a matter of fact, the word "Israel" may conjure up for the modern reader any one of four possible interpretations; and may do so, as we have noticed, for the Christian, even at the moment he is using the Psalms in worship. (a) "Israel" may mean for him that historical people whom Moses, under the hand of God, rescued from Egypt, and which has given us that great galaxy of mighty men whom we call the prophets. (b) "Israel" may mean that new "nation" which men today call the Church; no longer a people after the flesh, but now the whole fellowship, in Christ, of men of all nations and races and tongues, which St. Paul has termed the new "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). (c) "Israel" is the name of the Jewish people that has undoubtedly remained to this day as an entity continuous with the Israel of whom we read in the Old Testament. Here "Israel" is used as a synonym for "Jewry," the Jewish people of the present day. (d) "Israel" is the name of the modern state and home of some two million Jews, set up with almost messianic enthusiasm in May, 1948.

St. Paul had only three of those four meanings of the word "Israel" to wrestle with. Now we have a fourth to complicate the issues. Moreover, in the situation we know today, the Jews outside of the state of Israel are even yet living in small minority groups, in diaspora, amongst the majority of a western population which is nominally Christian, and which arrogates to itself insouciantly the very name of Israel which ought by rights to be the property of the Jew alone.

Before we can handle the issue which St. Paul raises in Romans 9-11, that of the rejection of the Jews, that is, of the Israel of his day, we shall first have to examine the meaning of the word as it is used in the Old Testament; because it is with the Old Testament and its interpretation of the word that Paul is concerned in the first place. In the Old Testament, the Children of Israel are undoubtedly the descendants of the patriarch of that name. Or, as we might say today, the people of Israel believed that the individual known as Jacob (the other name of Israel) was their father in a sense that is not disturbed by the less confident findings of the modern historian or archæologist. The latter may be doubtful of the historicity of an individual of that name; or he may prefer to think of the figure of "Israel" in terms



of a clan rather than of an individual. On the other hand, Jacob himself was the grandson of Abraham, the first individual patriarch to be called of God, the one in whose seed all nations of the earth were eventually to bless themselves. Now, it is Paul himself who points out that things did not in reality work exactly as Abraham might have thought they would (Rom. 9). Just two generations after Abraham had answered the call of God, a division took place amongst those who had now been born in consequence of God's promise. The division took form and substance when the line of promise, to which we have just referred, did not continue to run through the elder grandson, Esau, but turned unexpectedly to follow through that of the younger brother, Jacob. Thus it was that the "Israel" of God of which the Old Testament speaks, developed and grew, not as the embodiment of all the descendants of Abraham, to whom the divine promise had come, that is, not to all Israel, if we speak of Israel as Israel after the flesh alone, but to those alone within Israel whom God in His inscrutable wisdom had foreordained to be and to become *His* Israel, His Servant and Son and Bride. Thus it is that Paul infers that the word "Israel" must not necessarily be identified with one race of men according to the flesh. That then is why he can pursue his argument to the point where he shows that the Gentile peoples may even be called *into* this true Israel of God, and so actually become the Israel of God itself. As we have seen, this in one of the titles which he uses when he seeks to place the Church in its proper setting within the context of God's continuing and developing purpose for his world.

Is Paul right in thus tacitly identifying the word "Israel" with category (b) alone of all four of the possible applications of the word that can be made? The word "Israel," as the name of the new state on the soil of Palestine, we must therefore now link with all that is implied under the heading of category (c), and thus link it with all that goes with the story of the modern Jew.

The question of election in the Old Testament is closely bound up with what scholars have recently begun to call the doctrine of the Remnant; and the doctrine of the Remnant, in its turn, is closely linked with the notoriously difficult question of the hardening of the heart of those who are not elected to be members of the Remnant within the people of Israel. Let us then offer a brief sketch of how the Remnant question reveals itself in the pages of the Old Testament.

Not all the prophets possessed a clear doctrine of a Remnant, though those that do (e.g., Amos, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Trito-Isaiah (Isa. 65:8-10), Obadiah and Zephaniah (3:13), employ a number of nominal roots to convey their thoughts. Thus Joel (2:32) uses the root *palat*, "deliver," from which he takes his noun, for those who will be saved "on that day," while the root *sha'ar* was Isaiah's commonest choice of a word in this connection. Amos was sure that the coming "Day of the Lord" would be darkness and not light (Amos 5:18). When it came, then the Remnant that would survive the coming holocaust would be no more than two legs which a shepherd had rescued from the mouth of a lion, or worse still, just a piece of an ear (Amos 3:13). Isaiah, on the contrary, seems to have regarded his own disciples as the nucleus of the Remnant (Isa. 8:15-18), almost, in fact, as what we would call an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*. Anyway, he was utterly convinced that there would be a Remnant, and clearly declares his mind on a number of occasions (Isa. 1:9; 7:3; 10:20; 11:16; 28:5; etc.). Ezekiel's doctrine of the Remnant is strikingly different from that of the earlier prophets. In Ezek. 12:16 the Remnant comprises "a few men" whom God will "leave from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence." This thought is repeated and amplified later in 14:22-23. That is to say, the Remnant has *not*, as Jeremiah had declared, been carried away into Exile already in 598 B.C., but would be selected from those who were about to go through the siege that took place in 588-7 B.C. The fact that the prophets disagreed about the constitution of the Remnant is not important. After all, it is not man, but God, who alone knows who are the true believers (cf. II Kings 19:18). What is important is that the fact of a Remnant is central to the thoughts of so many of them.

The historians who write in the time and under the influence of the great prophets are able to see the hand of God in the history of Israel's past in like manner. They told of Abraham praying to God to spare the city of Sodom, and of how God agreed to do so on account of a mere handful of "righteous" inhabitants (Gen. 18:23-33). And they told of how the People of God had once all turned as a body to worship the Golden Calf, and of how God in his wrath had threatened to use the line of Moses alone to make them the great nation that Israel was meant to be (Ex. 32:1-10).

After the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. the last Remnant, the house of Judah, was finally and totally



destroyed as a political entity. The paradox that a Remnant would actually survive out of this total destruction is stated by the editor of the chapter which contains Isaiah's inaugural vision. He recognised that it was not sufficient to expect that even a tenth part of Israel would be the coming Remnant (Isa. 6:13). His last words (not to be found in the LXX, yet extant in the St. Mark Scroll A) are: "The holy seed is the stump of it." Our editor had the insight to realise that the seed must fall into the ground and die before it could grow to be the stem of a new tree. Thus he saw that Israel would not be a *continuum* after the flesh, but a *continuum* of grace alone.

The elect People of God, then, is seen in the Old Testament in two lights at once. It is seen as the whole nation of Israel as such, called of God to be his Bride (Hosea 1-3); and at the same time this whole People of God, God himself has hardened. So truly is this the case that it is quite impossible, nay, it is even ludicrous, for Israel to be considered as either the Bride or the Servant of the living God (Isa. 1:2-6; 6:9-10). We may put this paradox in another way, and make use of the language and interpretation which St. Paul gives of the problem. The whole nation of Israel comprises the two brothers at once. Israel *is* Jacob, called of God in love and grace to be God's Son and Servant. Israel *is* Esau, hated of God and predestined, when the extraordinary significance of Israel's relationship to the Father and Creator, not only of all Israel, but also of all men and of all things, is preached and expounded by a long series of prophets, predestined not to see with their eyes, or hear with their ears what God had in mind to do with them.

Yet Paul is aware that the Old Testament itself provides the answer to him who seeks a way out of the impasse when two such contradictory views occur of God's relationship to the people He has chosen. Paul now quotes Isa. 28:16, as he comes to the conclusion of the argument he has presented in Romans 9: "Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offence" (Rom. 9:33). Then, in Rom. 10:11 he adds the further quotation from Isaiah: "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed," thus completing the verse from which he had first quoted.

It is surely one of the sorriest of modern heresies, with which the sects such as the British Israelites, the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and others, are riddled, to suggest that some men are chosen of God as if they were representative of only one of the sons of Isaac, as if they were

Jacob alone, without supposing that they had his brother Esau in their make-up as well. Esau, we must keep in mind, if we are to follow Paul's argument, was the grandson of him to whom the first promise was given. And Esau's old blind father did in fact pass on to his son a blessing as the heritage of what he himself had received already from his father before him (Gen. 27:38-40). The view of those sectists is foreign to the thought of Paul. It is foreign to him on the ground that Paul regards first, the election of Israel, second, the validity of all the promises that were given to Israel, and third, the outcome of the narrowing down process ending with the Remnant within Israel, as all having their sole outcome in Jesus Christ. To Paul, Christ is the "end" not only of all that Jacob stood for, but also of all that the word Esau entailed. In Christ is to be found the End of the whole people of God, both of that people after the flesh (because He was born of Mary of Jewish blood), and of that people after the spirit (because He was born of God, and of the promise which God gave to both the fathers and to David). That is why we see in Christ the outcome both of the blessing and the curse. Christ conveyed to the People of God the blessing spoken of through Jacob, so that People became the blessed People indeed; and Christ bore on His own body the curse uttered upon the People of God, embodying as they do the hardness of heart which Esau exemplified long before. Thus, in other words, as Paul puts it, the whole Israel of God, Israel after the flesh, God has already rejected, on the ground that Esau is as truly a son of Isaac as is Jacob. On the other hand, God's sovereign will and purpose naturally permit Him to have mercy on whom He will have mercy. Yet not even the privileged descendants of Abraham, Israelites "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came . . .", not even they deserve in any respect that He show any mercy upon them at all. This is because, as we have said, *all* Israel is as truly Esau as it is also as assuredly chosen to be Jacob, and as such, to be the Servant that God has in mind to use (Isa. 49:3). All Israel is thus both elected and rejected at the same time. This is made evident when we behold how it is *in Christ* that Israel is both elected and rejected. Christ is the epitome, the consummation, the End of all that Israel was both elected and rejected to be.



We see then why it is that Paul must roundly declare that *all* men must stand under the judgment of God, both Jew and Gentile alike. If even the Jew, who has certainly been called of God from the days of Moses to be God's Servant and Bride—if even he now stands under the condemnation of His wrath, then how much more must the Gentile, who has never known God's will or ways? But then we also now understand from Paul's argument how *all* men, both Jews and Gentiles, may respond to the election of God, since that election has now become operative through the work of Christ alone. Rejection and election are both bound up together, because they are both made visible to us in this one and the same work of Christ. "What then? Israel failed to obtain what it sought. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened . . ." (Rom. 11:7 R.S.V.). The result is that the elect are now the elect in a new sense. They are the elect "in Christ." These elect may be the elect from out of any and every nation under heaven. Whereas the rest who are "hardened" may also be of those from any nation under heaven, including those who call themselves Israel after the flesh, in other words, the Jews of our category (c).

On the other hand, it is a fact of history that Jewry as a whole throughout the centuries of the Christian era has remained "hardened" to the call and the significance of the work of Christ. It is true that individual Jews have discovered that their election finds its place in the election of Christ, and so by grace have transferred from category (c) to category (b). Yet this same Jewry is in full continuity with that People of God which we have called category (a), that race of men with whom God did in actual fact enter into a covenant which was to last for all eternity. The God of whom we read in the Old Testament is shown to be the faithful God, who does not go back upon promises He has made, and if it is indeed a fact that at Sinai He entered into a Covenant with Israel, then that Covenant is bound to stand for all eternity. This must be true even when God finds Himself bound to a People whom He foreknew would be hard of heart, whom He foreknew would be the harlot Bride (as Hosea puts it) and who would refuse to do and be what He had called them to do and be at Sinai for the furthering of His purposes of grace to all men. Thus it came about, to use a human expression, that God was forced to "change His plan." God now works towards His ends, not through the compliance of His Covenant People, but through the resistance of that very

People, in fact, actually through their enmity towards Him, who had chosen them to be His instrument. In other words, God's predestined purpose, unthwarted by the sin of Israel's unbelief, is able to pursue its victorious course *through* and by means of Israel's resistance, *through* and by means of meeting with Israel's uncompromising "No" to God's gracious invitation to be His Bride and People, and not through Israel's allowing herself to become the compliant and willing instrument of God's plan. If Israel had thus allowed herself to be used of God, and had set herself at the disposal of God's plan of grace, the result would have been, Paul argues, not one exhibiting grace, and grace alone. It would have been one exhibiting grace, indeed, yet grace *plus* the faith and willing obedience of the People of God's choice.<sup>1</sup> In actual fact, however, Israel did not comply with the leading of God's Spirit. Israel's heart was in fact totally hardened against the leading of the Spirit. And of course just such a reaction on the part of Israel had to be by the predeterminate forewilling of the God of grace. God had to predestine His chosen and beloved Israel to harden their hearts to His call to co-operate with Him, else neither Israel herself, nor the world in its turn, would ever have been in the position to comprehend that God's purpose for His world was one of *grace alone*. If Israel had complied, then God's purpose of grace alone would not have been clearly seen. It might have appeared to the eye of man that Almighty God needed the aid of His own creation before His purposes could work out with men.

That is why, then, when we come to the New Testament story, we read that the Son of Man *must* suffer (*dei*). That is also why the original Son of Man, viz., Israel (cf. Ps. 80:17) had been predestined of God from the beginning to become, not just the Servant of God, but in fact the *Suffering* Servant of God, to become that body of flesh through which, and because of whose resistance, the purposes of God would eventually work out, nay, whose resistance, humanly speaking, was the necessary factor for the outpouring of God's grace. That is not to say that God needed Israel's resistance, and it alone, before His grace could reach to men. Nor is it true to say that God chose to create Israel with a heart that was bound to be hard, since He needed Israel's hardness of heart before His grace could abound. No. Who is man to say how God should and can act when God alone creates the factors that He

1. This argument of Paul should be borne in mind in all discussions on Baptism.



uses for His plans? So why should it not be possible for God to let grace abound even if Israel, *of her own accord*, had not chosen to resist His will? But since, as a matter of history, Christ was born into this particular people which, of its own accord, had chosen to resist God's will, then Christ is now recognised to be the "End" of the Suffering Servant that Israel was bound to be. Christ is now seen to bear in His own flesh the outcome of that resistance by Israel to the redemptive love of God and to the absolute and total grace of God, which needs nothing that man can add to it, in respect to what God has done in His self-giving both for that same Israel and for all men.

That is why "the Jews" are needed in the plan of God even now. On the one hand, the true Israel of God, as we see the Church is called to be at the present day, is composed of those who, in Christ, the "End" of Israel, have met with and rejoiced to accept this sovereign grace of the God who entered into Covenant with Israel long ago at the foot of Sinai. That is why Israel is now composed of all races of men under the sun, both of those who belong to Israel after the flesh, and of those who, born as Gentiles by blood, are now engrafted into Israel, and who now in their turn recognise that God has used and is still using the Covenant which He imposed on Israel at Sinai. They recognise that God still upholds that Covenant, not because He bound Himself at Sinai to a people who gladly thereafter sought to do His will. It is the great misunderstanding of Jewry to this day to imagine that man can, by an effort of his will, keep the commandments of the living God, and so fulfil the covenant which God has made with them. He has bound himself to a people whom He foreknew would not and never could do His will. As a matter of historical fact, right to this day the Jew has not been able to do God's will. In that connection the Gentile Christian never ought to gloat. This is because no more does he do the will of God than does the Jew. It is God alone who is good and faithful and true. Man is never any of these things. The Gentile Christian has in fact become a member of the true Israel of God only because he has become a "member" of Him who is the "End" and fulfilment of all that Israel was foreordained to be.

On the other hand, the corollary of what we have said is that Jewry must still be bound to God by the Covenant made at Sinai, since God is not one to go back on His promises to a people whom He foreknew would not be

able to keep the promise they had made to Him (Ex. 19:3-8). And so, Jewry is still comprehended within the cosmic plan of God. Jewry cannot in any sense be rejected. The Gentile Christian only knows the blessedness he now has because Jewry is still part of the cosmic plan. They are the people whom God selected for suffering, knowing that they would *have to* suffer as a result of their stiff-necked pride, and He did so in order that the rest of mankind might learn of His grace for all. In other words, the terrible paradox is undoubtedly true that we in the Church of Christ know of and rejoice in the grace of God only at the expense of the Jew.

Thus we have reached the point of recognising that the four categories into which we allotted the word "Israel" are not correctly defined, if we are to think as Paul thinks in Romans 9-11. Jewry is as truly part of Israel as is the Christian Church. This is because the Church has found the grace which has called her into existence only through and because of the resistance and resulting suffering of Israel after the flesh. We who call ourselves the Christian Church are what we are only because Jewry, by the predestined purpose and foreknowledge of God, has borne in her own body that aspect of the work of Christ which God required of Him when He accepted rejection that the world might be saved — Jewry has now become the Suffering Servant on our behalf: "As concerning the gospel [the Jews] are enemies for your sakes" (Rom. 11:28a).

How utterly out of place then has been the whole miserable story of Anti-semitism and of Jew-baiting which has so marred the relationships that ought to have obtained between the new Israel and Jewry, between the Church of God and the shadow Church of God. No reality exists without its shadow. Even in the beginning there could not have been Light had there not been Darkness in which the Light might shine. The Darkness is thus surely part of God's plan, if it was His will that Light should shine at all. The resistance of Israel, too, will some day no longer be needed, when the Light is all in all. The resistance of Israel, too, will some day no longer be needed, when the Church as the Body of Christ will have comprehended all races and nations of man. "The gifts and the call of God are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29 RSV). The day when Jewry's hardness of heart will end is thus bound to come. "As touching the election they are [still] beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Rom. 11:28b). Their disobedience and



hardness of heart will no longer be needed in God's plan once the whole earth has found and received the grace of God (vv. 31-33).

But in the meantime, who are we to despise the Jew? He has been the scapegoat of our sins ever since Caiaphas' heart grew hard. But if there had been no Caiaphas, there would have been no Cross, and thus no redemption for mankind. To say as much is to speak, of course, merely "as a man." St. Paul would never have allowed us to formulate a theodicy that would limit God's creative purpose to such channels as are known to the human mind. The Jew is one of us. He is our brother Esau. On the other hand, he believes that he is Jacob. Yet it is we who, by grace, are Jacob, rather than he, since we have been engrafted into the line of Jacob — by grace, indeed, grace which has come our way only because Jewry in their turn have first had to become Esau and to have refused their mighty heritage. Jewry, nay *Israel* (and so we have now had to use this term as the Jew himself uses it) has suffered to this very day in the form of the Suffering Servant. He knows what it means to be rejected, so that you and I might find eternal life. God help us then if we think that we have deserved such a costly redemption.

To ignore the Jew, then, even where he is a small minority in the community, as is the case in the Southern Hemisphere, is both theologically unsound and an offence against the love of Christ. If the Church today, in its pride, arrogates to itself alone the place and function of Israel, then it does so at its peril. The Christian approach to the Jew must of necessity be the primary and fundamental activity of the modern church as it explores its ecumenical duties.

GEORGE A. F. KNIGHT

## **Theology and the Darwin Centenary**

### *The Last Hundred Years.*

One hundred years ago, on 1st July, 1858, the joint papers of A. R. Wallace and Charles Darwin relating to Natural Selection were read to the Linnean Society of London. They were followed by the publication on 24th November, 1859, of the first edition of Darwin's monumental work, "The Origin of Species." In this way began the controversy which, more than anything else, was to dominate the relationships between scientists and theologians for the next fifty years and more. It is appropriate in this centenary year to look back over the past hundred

years and to try to examine the present state of the science-religion question in the light of developments during that time.

It is well known that Darwin and Wallace were not the first to suggest that "species undergo modification, and that the existing forms of life are the descendants by true generation of pre-existing forms."<sup>1</sup> The contribution which Darwin and Wallace made was in putting forward a plausible mechanism, that of natural selection, backed up with much evidence, of how the changes might have taken place. Earlier workers, notably Lamarck, depended upon the idea of the inheritance of acquired characteristics — an hypothesis which even now has few scientific adherents. Even in Darwin's writings, this idea occasionally seems to occur. Darwin did not claim that natural selection was the only mechanism producing modifications, and of course had no idea how the characteristic development was handed on. This was not known until Abbe Mendel's experiments on heredity were publicised by Bateson some thirty years later (they were in fact being carried out at the same time as Darwin's work).

At the time of the publication of Darwin's results, the opposition which resulted came largely from scientists, notably Richard Owen and Adam Sedgewick. The attack by the Bishop of Oxford (Samuel Wilberforce), so well known, seems to have been partly inspired by the former.<sup>2</sup> On the clerical side, the reception given to Darwinism was in many cases quietly favourable; in fact T. H. Huxley went so far as to confess himself "pleasantly disappointed; there has been far less virulence and much more just appreciation of the weight of scientific evidence than I expected."<sup>3</sup> Raven suggests that the reason for the bloodless victory of the new theory was that many churchmen had been convinced of the untenable nature of the doctrine of the fixity of species. This had, in fact, been regarded as scientific orthodoxy only since the time of Linnaeus early in the 18th century. Darwin's theory seemed so reasonable, and so well supported by observational evidence, that it satisfied the requirements of an alternative. This must not be allowed to conceal the fact that some of the scientific objections to Darwin's theory were valid, and have never been met, and there have been many modifications to the theory since 1859. Most biologists seem content to maintain

1. C. Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, World Classics edn, 1956, p. xxi.

2. C. E. Raven, *Science, Religion and the Future*, 1943, p. 42.

3. Unpublished letter of 2nd June, 1863, quoted by Raven, *op. cit.*, p. 47.



that evolution is a fact, and to agree that the mechanism is not fully understood.

As frequently happens in a controversy of this kind, attitudes on opposite sides hardened in the next few decades. Many scientists and philosophers, for example Huxley and Herbert Spencer, sought to go further than Darwin himself, and to erect a complete world-view which had no need of the Creator. That modern materialistic state, the U.S.S.R., teaches Darwinism together with Marxism in its schools as one of the foundations of its philosophy. And, on the other hand, many books have been written by Christians denouncing Evolution in general and Darwinism in particular as contrary to the revealed Word of God. On the other side, similar intensity of feeling occurs. I have heard tell of a scientist who, in his lectures on evolution, was accustomed to classify the Churches as "progressive" or "non-progressive" in accordance with what he thought was the attitude of the majority of their members to the theory of evolution.

There have certainly been different attitudes to scientific theories to be found among theologians. There have been those who have denied the scientists any right to make independent theories on matters which appear to be conclusively dealt with in the Scriptures. There have been those who have agreed with the scientists at every point, and have resolved any difficulties at the expense of the Scriptures. And some have sought to hold a balance between the two extremes, by recognising the truth of both points of view — that our interpretation of scripture may need revision in the light of advancing knowledge, and that the independence and simultaneous validity of the Biblical and scientific views of nature must be maintained in a way that does justice to both.

It should be recognised that a reconciliation of science with the Bible was made by 19th century scientists and theologians in terms of the science they knew, and that seemed clear enough. We can see the same kind of thing in the present day, when some preachers interpret the universe in terms of Professor Hoyle's "continuous creation" theory, and others adhere to the instantaneous creation theory, both of which have their scientific champions. But scientific theories come and go, and it is folly for our theology to be so firmly bound to one of them that when it falls, we lose our faith! St. Augustine's words in this connection are still apposite: "If we find anything

in Holy Scripture which may be variously explained without injury to faith we should not rush headlong, by positive assertion, either to one opinion or the other; lest if perchance the opinion we have adopted should afterwards turn out to be false, our faith should fall with it."<sup>5</sup>

Darwin's own view of the relation between his theories and Scripture is rather obscure. He has been represented as a sincere Christian, and also as a man to whom Christianity meant little in his later life. It is known from his own words that much of his earlier religious belief deserted him towards the end of his life; but it is another question whether he was deliberately seeking to undermine the teachings of the Scriptures as they were accepted. He certainly added many passages to later editions of "*The Origin of Species*" which gave the impression that he was a believer in what has come to be called "theistic evolution." It has been suggested<sup>6</sup> that these alterations were made as a concession to popular clamour, but there is no need to hold this; Darwin's own mind seems to have changed as time went on. He was never as anti-clerical as Huxley, who was very conscious of the low regard in which scientists were held by the community as a whole compared with the clergy, and could never resist an opportunity for a jibe at what he considered the absurd teaching of the Old Testament; for example, "In this nineteenth century . . . the cosmogony of the semi-barbarous Hebrew is the incubus of the philosopher and the opprobrium of the orthodox,"<sup>7</sup> and again, "The clergy are at present divisible into three sections: an immense body who are ignorant and speak out; a small proportion who know and are silent, and a minute minority who know and speak according to their knowledge."<sup>8</sup> He urges that clergy should acquire "some such tincture of physical science as will put them in a position to understand the difficulties in the way of accepting their theories, which are forced upon the mind of every thoughtful and intelligent man, who has taken the trouble to instruct himself in the elements of natural knowledge."<sup>9</sup> This suggestion still has a good deal to commend it.

With the challenge thus rudely thrown down, churchmen could not fail to answer it. Much of the controversy is past history, and many things were said on both sides

5. St. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, Book 1, Ch. xviii, n.37.

6. R. S. D. Clark, *Darwin, Before and After*, 1948, p. 87.

7. T. H. Huxley, *Lay Sermons*, 6th edn, 1877, p. 277.

8. *ibid.*, p. 61.

9. *ibid.*, p. 60.



which are best forgotten. There is no need now to go into details of the various opinions held by scientists and theologians. One thing which stands out is the lability of men's views on matters of the kind under discussion. Another is the looseness with which terms may be used by different people. For example, the very term "evolution" may be used of the biological theory proposed by Darwin, or it may be used in the sense of Herbert Spencer and others, who made a whole philosophy out of it. There has been a tendency in recent years for Christian theologians to take the position that the process by which God brought our human bodies into their present form is unimportant; the point on which to insist is that *God* did it, and not some blind concatenation of fortuitous circumstances. We have even turned our hands to discovering passages in ancient authors which suggest that they believed in the gradual development of forms of life. Dr. C. E. Raven has gone so far as to suggest that in Romans 8:18 *seq.*, St. Paul is "the first to propound a coherent scheme of creative evolution." I imagine that few will want to follow him in this interpretation of the Apostle's great assertion of the unity of the whole creation, and in his confidence that the ultimate purpose of God would be revealed in a wider sphere than that of the human race alone.

The rise of the school of higher criticism associated with the name of Wellhausen, and successive developments from this approach to the study of the Scriptures, led many to conclude that, as far as scientific matters were concerned, the Bible had nothing to say further than to express contemporary ideas about natural phenomena. What it said was therefore of little importance, as it was fully superseded by later knowledge. But it was some time before it came to be recognised that the Bible was making theological assertions about the origin and purpose of the natural universe. These assertions cannot be lightly dismissed and classified with the myths and legends of Assyria and Babylonia. They must be seriously considered as the inspired assertions of men of faith, and the question of their significance for us faced.

One of the problems of Biblical interpretation which plagues us now, as it did not our forefathers, is the realisation that the men through whom the Spirit spoke to Israel, and whose writings have come to us, were men of the ancient East, not of the modern West. This means, as has frequently been pointed out, that their modes of expressing themselves, and their literary forms, are those

of their own time and people. But we need not lose heart. It is obvious that, if the activity of God the Holy Spirit in supervising the writing of the Scriptures for our learning is to mean anything, it must mean that the manner and form of the revelation is such as to convey its essential truths to all men at all times. God spoke "at sundry times and in diverse manners," and through His human agents used Hebrew and Greek and Aramaic as media of instruction. But all along, it was the same God, speaking to everyone, everywhere. And the modern missionary movement has shown us that St. Paul's assertion that the Word of God is quick and powerful holds good in any national context and culture.

It is fairly generally recognised that in the light of considerations such as these, it is unrealistic to seek exact correlation between Biblical and "scientific" ways of describing natural phenomena. In particular, the old argument about "Genesis and Geology" has hardly the force it once was thought to have. But it is equally unrealistic to dismiss the early chapters of Genesis as "myth" or "parable." The whole of the Old Testament is built upon the conception of God the Creator contained in those chapters. Because He is the Creator, He is sovereign alike of man and nature, and can do with them as He will. And God chose Israel to be the bearer of His Word to men of all nations. This is the basis of the metaphor of the potter and the clay, used by Jeremiah and St. Paul. To describe Genesis 1 as a poem, as is frequently done, is to ignore the considerations which lead N. H. Ridderbos to write, "J. D. van der Ploeg writes: 'In spite of everything, the text of Genesis 1:1 - 2:4a is sober, not lyrical, and certainly no poem.' This is certainly correct. To feel the difference between the Genesis account of creation and the poetic accounts of it, one should read in succession Genesis 1:6-8, Job 38:8-11 and Psalm 104:5-9."<sup>10</sup>

### *The History of Scientific Apologetic.*

It is instructive to look back over the history of scientific apologetic to see how the Church has sought to commend its message, or at least to interpret it, to non-Christian intellectuals. After Tertullian's famous outburst protesting against such compromise, it was Origen, perhaps, who first seriously attempted something of the kind in his controversy with Celsus. Dr. Raven outlines in his Gifford lectures how Origen uses current scientific

10. N. H. Ridderbos, *Is there a Conflict between Genesis I and Natural Science?* p. 35. The whole book is a most valuable contribution to the subject.



theories to counter Celsus' assertion that the birth of Jesus was the outcome of an adulterous union between Mary and a Roman soldier. "He appeals to the physiognomists Zopyrus, Loxus and Polemon, who held that there was a real correlation between soul and body, and argues that if this be so, it is unthinkable that so pure a soul should inhabit a body so basely born."<sup>11</sup> The truth of the theory is of no importance to us here; it is the attitude that is relevant.

In the Middle Ages, when the authority of Aristotle was unquestioned by most, it was necessary to seek a reconciliation between Aristotelian thought and Christian doctrine. This was done by Aquinas, but it is important to remember that there were other schools of Aristotelians than his, notably those of the Arabs. In the same way, there were Christian scholars who did not accept Thomas' philosophy, although the time came when they were pronounced *de fide*. In fact, we owe a great deal to the followers of William of Ockham, who did much to reinstate the primacy of experiment over theory in scientific work. But when Copernicus' writings were placed on the Index in 1616 (long after the author's death), it was as much because his views were held to be "philosophically absurd" (that is, contrary to the universally-accepted teaching of science) as because they were contrary to Scripture.<sup>12</sup>

Among the Reformers, John Calvin stands out for his comprehensive grasp of the principles behind a satisfactory treatment of our subject. Some of his opinions may make us smile, and murmur "a son of his time," but who among us can cast the first stone? Calvin was quite clear that the Biblical account of Creation must be understood in the light of human knowledge about the Universe. His commentary on Genesis affords ample evidence of this. Professor R. Hooykaas has shown how in this he differed from men such as Voetius, who came after him, but reverted in their thinking to a kind of mediæval authoritarianism. To quote Hooykaas, "The apostles and evangelists, so he (Voetius) said, were taught languages and sciences by the Holy Spirit, and apart from that, their hand was so guided that they did not need personal study and yet wrote on scientific questions in an infallible manner."<sup>13</sup> In his *Sermon van de Nuttigheyt der Academien* (1636), Voetius maintains that the Bible "teaches not only what is necessary to salvation but also

11. *Contra Celsum* 1.33, quoted C. E. Raven, *Science and Religion*, 1953, p. 45.

12. A. C. Crombie, *Augustine to Galileo*, 195, pp. 324-7.

13. R. Hooykaas, *Christian Faith and the Freedom of Science*, 1957, p. 10.

lays down the principles of all other good sciences and arts."<sup>14</sup> In contrast to him, Calvin believed that "Moses wrote in a popular style; he only described what all ordinary persons endowed with common sense are able to understand, whereas the astronomers investigate whatever the ingenuity of the human mind can comprehend."<sup>15</sup>

Interestingly enough, we find Calvin speaking of spontaneous generation of life in the sea, of several spheres containing the heavenly bodies, and of the little star of Saturn which is greater than the Moon, that is, than one of the "great lights" spoken of by Moses. All these ideas come from contemporary science. The Bible is a book for all; "He who would learn astronomy and other recondite arts, let him go elsewhere."<sup>16</sup> And this was the attitude of Kepler and others like him.

But Calvin was concerned that in every way our activities should be aimed at glorifying God, for this was indeed the first duty of man. Thus, he condemned those who engaged in what he considered profitless speculations about space and time: "In their cupidity they affect to go beyond the world, as if the ample circumference of heaven and earth did not contain objects numerous and resplendent enough to absorb all our senses; as if in the period of six thousand years, God had not furnished facts enough to exercise our minds in ceaseless meditation."<sup>17</sup> A glance at the context of this passage shows that Calvin, with Augustine, is condemning those who seek reasons from God, other than His will, for not having created man earlier, or for having placed him on such an insignificant planet. He is not enjoining Christians to have no truck with interplanetary travel (although he would probably have thought it a waste of time!). The warning is a warning against spiritual pride, the *hubris* which ever since the time of Adam has been the cause of man's downfall. No one who has read Calvin's outburst of praise for God's majesty, wisdom and power in creation can doubt that it was to him a pious duty to contemplate the works of God.<sup>18</sup>

It is not surprising, then, to find that when Linnaeus and his successors in the early 18th century defined species as biological units and declared them immutable, theologians followed suit, although the idea had not previously been given much thought. Accepting these principles they

14. *Idem*, *ibid.*, p. 10.

15. Hooykaas, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

16. J. Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis*, on Gen. 1.15.

17. J. Calvin, *Institutes*, Book I, c. xiv. 1.

18. *Ibid.*, I. xiv. 20-22.



would naturally be confused when Darwin introduced a theory which would contradict principles upheld by the pontiffs of the scientific hierarchy. Small wonder that churchmen were not more ready to side with him, especially when it became clear that many of his supporters were looking for an alternative to a belief in God.

### *The Problem To-day.*

Now the pendulum has swung, and with most theologians holding that Genesis 1 is not to be interpreted in exactly the same way as most of our great-grandparents thought, it is customary to say that there is no conflict now; let the scientist have his say on matters scientific, and let the Biblical scholar take his cue from him. Now, it must be recognised that here the two views of reality must meet: the why and the how. It has been sufficiently emphasised that religion and science are concerned with ultimate causes and with mechanisms respectively. Professor John Baillie made this point very well in his sermon to the British Association in 1952.<sup>19</sup> The scientific views may be ephemeral; the theologian's, in so far as they relate to the fact of God's activity, are permanent. But even here, there seems to be a wide divergence of opinions about what we can learn from the Bible. What some call history, others call myth, or parable. Even our translation of the Hebrew is inclined to be influenced by our scientific presuppositions, so that we try to harmonise the two. It has been suggested that the translation "firmament" for the Hebrew *raqia* in Genesis 1 reflects an Aristotelian belief in the crystal spheres, and that a translation "expanse" would more correctly interpret the word. But this seems to be just as open to criticism on the ground that it reads a modern view of the heavens into the word. Such sophistication is foreign to the text, which surely demands a metaphorical sense. A cognate word means "metal bowl," and the figure of speech is wholly appropriate to the "vault of heaven," even in our time.

In a similar way, much wordy war has raged around the phrase "after its kind," which has been invoked to exclude the theory of evolution from consideration as a permissible description of how God made the different kinds of animals. But here again, to equate the broad term *min* with the precise scientific term *species* is to place too great a load on the Hebrew language. Caution must clearly be exercised.

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19. J. Baillie, *Science and the Spiritual Life*.

But important as the subject of the creation of life is, we must not allow it to monopolise any discussion of science in relation to the Bible. It is one of the merits of recent British thought on this general theme that the broader issues have been faced. Several important books have appeared, and among them two books by Thomists are important for the depth of their treatment, whatever one thinks of their presuppositions: *The Power and Limits of Science*, by E. F. Caldin (a lecturer in Chemistry at the University of Leeds) and Dr. E. L. Mascall's Bampton Lectures on *Natural Science and Christian Theology*. A book by the late Canon A. F. Smethurst, *Modern Science and Christian Belief*, has been widely praised in some quarters. It covers a wide field, but does not go very deeply into any subject. For the subject of miracles, older books such as Prof. Alan Richardson's *Miracle Stories of the Gospels* are perfectly adequate, and say all that we can say. I believe that we must beware of giving too much away in order to try to meet scientific colleagues half-way. We simply do not know what happened in many instances; but in the Gospels, we are certainly dealing with the presence of the Creator, and anything could happen.

One of the most popular principles in recent scientific apologetics is the "Principle of Complementarity." Perhaps its best-known, though not its original, exponent, is Prof. C. A. Coulson, now of the University of Oxford.<sup>20</sup> This principle maintains that a purely scientific and a purely religious treatment of a situation can be simultaneously and completely true, but that both must be maintained. Thus we may say "there are a few ink-marks on that piece of paper," or we may say "there is a profound mathematical theorem on the paper." One must not deny the truth of one statement because of the truth of the other. In invoking this principle, however, sight must not be lost of the "boundary conditions." That is, we must be careful that any world-view built up on one set of presuppositions must blend, as it were along the edge, with one built up on the other set. If this is to be so, the scientist must not lay down arbitrary criteria of the nature of truth — it is hard to see a synthesis of the Biblical view of nature and one which asserts that "I am interested only in the knowable . . . the creative process that I call reality is completely self-contained and self-sufficient. Outside it there can be nothing. Therefore it is not made of anything, whether matter or spirit, or by anyone, call it God or

20. See, e.g. *Christianity in an Age of Science*, Riddell Memorial Lectures, 1953.



Absolute.”<sup>21</sup> This appears to beg the whole question at issue. A scientist may lay down limits within which he is prepared to work; he must not say there is nothing else.

The folly of any position which makes the power of God simply a device for dealing with our ignorance has been amply demonstrated. In so many ways our understanding of nature has progressed that we can see our way to the imitation of natural phenomena once regarded as certainly outside the range of man's comprehension. Miracles of nature such as rain-making become possible. The construction of toys which appear to move by random “choice” becomes a simple problem in electronics, and activities of living creatures can be simulated by simple physical systems. We cannot deny these occurrences. The Christian belief in God's sovereignty over the world is grounded upon the Word of God. We are responsible for what we do with the knowledge that has been given to us. Moral choices need to be made in respect of the application of our scientific knowledge. Here the Christian stands on firm ground, and must be ready to pass judgment on the basis of the Law of God. And the ultimate ground for this must be the confidence that in Jesus Christ “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”

If this indeed happened, the intervention of God in His own created order, to achieve His purposes, is no unreasonable thing, and the Christian will go in hope, waiting and working for the consummation of all things. He will emulate the Puritans, who “while knowing that their fatherland was in heaven . . . had their feet firmly planted on the earth; while knowing that the Kingdom of God could not be established on earth by sinful men, they felt the duty to act as if it could be done. They held that the purifying light of Christ should penetrate into every department of life and into every secular activity. So, through their unconditional surrender to God, they furthered the freedom of science, that is the liberation from worldly and pious traditions and from the dictatorship of reason.”<sup>22</sup>

J. A. FRIEND

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21. Gordon Childe, *Society and Knowledge*, 1956.

22. R. Hooykaas, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

## Book Reviews

### PRINCIPALS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP; With Special Reference to the Free Churches.

By Raymond Abba (Oxford University Press, London), 1957, pp. xiii, 196; 17/6 (Aust.).

This book reproduces the substance of lectures delivered under the United Faculty in Sydney by the former Warden of Camden College; and it is good to have this permanent record of the teaching of one whose chief contribution to Australian theological thought was probably in the field covered by this book.

In six chapters the author traverses the ground suggested by the title (within the limits suggested by the sub-title), and succeeds in providing a valuable compendium of historical information and practical advice. Anyone who is called upon to conduct, or anyone who takes more than passing interest in, the Public Worship (including the Sacraments) of the Church will find in this a book both interesting and useful.

With disagreement at some points, there is ever so much to which I find myself ready to cry: "So may it be!" I am happy to find assertions that the customary words asking a blessing upon the Word read should come after *all* the lections have been given (p. 53) and that the reading of a Psalm responsively is not a substitute for the Old Testament Lesson (p. 126), a reminder of Whale's statement that "Reformers are iconoclasts only because Catholics have been innovators" (p. 24), an indication of what can be the only significance of a prayer of "Invocation" in a Christian Service (p. 88), and a declaration that the present practice in Baptism implies a view which the first Free Churchmen strove to eliminate—that the Church is coterminous with the nation (p. 150). And it is good to see that someone with knowledge of the Australian situation has had the courage to suggest that an effective pulpit ministry cannot be sustained in defiance of the old rule that a minister spend four hours in his study every morning (p. 73).

A defect of the book is an excess of quotations, some of which add nothing to what the author himself says, though to those who have done no other reading in this field many of the quotations should open up possibilities of a wider study. This last remark must also be made concerning the footnotes, of which there are many, and which (in a happy departure from the growing practice which precludes convenience of reference) appear on the same pages as the portions of the text to which they relate. A bibliography ("intended for the reader rather than for the specialist") and an index (with some important omissions—nothing is indexed under "Order of Service" or "Position of Minister" though the author makes some useful remarks on both these subjects in his chapter on "Public Prayer") add to the usefulness of the book. Misprints occur on pages 79 ("this particular passages") and 165 (where a comma should replace the full stop in the fifth line).

J. F. PETER.

### MAN IN NATURE AND GRACE.

By Stuart Barton Babbage (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids), 1957, pp. 125; \$1.50.

The "Pathway Books," which on a scholarly basis seek "to make relevant to modern men the basic affirmations of the Christian faith," have within the last two years established themselves as a valuable series of apologetical studies of general interest. It is now a pleasure to welcome to the number of earlier American and European



contributors the Joint Editor of this *Review*, who, with other Australasian writers, is making a contribution to the series.

In this short monograph Dr. Babbage successively considers Man and Biblical Revelation, Classical Culture, Christian Thought, Contemporary Politics, Modern Existentialism, English Literature and Human Mortality. In the opening chapter it is clearly shown that in contrast to Hellenistic idealism which regarded man as imprisoned in a body and modern naturalism which conceives of him as an evolving animal, "the Bible witnesses to a duality in unity" (13). With Barth, the basic concept of the *imago Dei* is interpreted as embodying not an *analogia entis* but an *analogia fidei*, whilst the Biblical idea of sin as rebellion against God, "existence in contradiction" is contrasted with the intellectualistic Greek notion which equated evil with ignorance. In the development of Christian doctrine the crucial importance of Augustine in making the volitional the central feature of man's life in the understanding of sin and grace, is rightly stressed. (In the discussion Pelagius is incorrectly described as "an English monk" (39). In his studies on contemporary politics, philosophy and literature, Dr. Babbage, in reviewing the thought of a wide range of writers from Hobbes to Graham Greene, gives special attention to the desperate problem of man's depersonalization and dehumanization with which existentialism is especially concerned. There follows a vivid piece of writing concerning the pathological squeamishness of the present generation in the face of natural death. The volume concludes, with Calvin, that the only solution to man's basic problem of lostness is true self-knowledge, which can only be attained when man, having contemplated the face of God, then looks at himself.

In this brief study, which must necessarily leave many side tracks of anthropology unexplored, Dr. Babbage does not claim originality, but he has read widely and quotes discriminatingly and the result is a balanced and useful compendium which finds a worthy place alongside the other monographs in this commendable series.

R. SWANTON.

#### THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF HISTORY.

By John McIntyre (Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh), 1957, pp. 119; 12/6.

This book will be read with intense interest by the author's many friends in Australia. John McIntyre gave some ten years to the Australian Church as Professor of Theology in St. Andrew's College within the University of Sydney. Some two years ago he was recalled to succeed John Baillie as Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. John McIntyre brought a rich contribution to the Church in Australia, and his friends will recall with pleasure and profit his penetrating and original mind.

The present work is the substance of lectures delivered in Union Theological Seminary, New York, and the University of Otago, New Zealand. We now have in printed form the author's reflections on a subject of most pressing concern. The meaning of history, and particularly the theological meaning of history, has been a subject of urgent preoccupation to many contemporary theologians. It is sufficient to recall the names of Berdyaev, Butterfield, Collingwood, Cullmann, Jaspers, Niebuhr, Rust and Tillich, all of whom have produced major works on this theme. (Strangely enough, McIntyre does not mention Carl Jaspers nor the work of Isaiah Berlin).

McIntyre's work is an independent and original production. It is not easy reading. It is emphatically not bedside reading. It is solidly philosophical; and the use of mathematical symbols for the discussion

of theological concepts will be foreign to most Biblical theologians. It would be interesting to know, for example, what Father Hebert make of his analysis of fulfilment (*The Throne of David*) when expressed in terms of logical analysis.

"(i) Situation Sn may be said to fulfil situation Sa when, because of certain analogies, some of an interesting nature, features of Sa, are useful in the description of Sn (rejected). (ii) Sn fulfils Sa when in Sn there is evidence that events predicted in detail in Sa actually come to pass (rejected). (iii) Sn fulfils Sa when the latter provides certain concepts without which Sn does not 'make sense;' or when Sn compels for its adequate interpretation the use of concepts to be found only in Sa (accepted). (iv) A severe critic might say that iii is only a refined form of i, and the criticism can only be averted by the addition of a fourth sense of the concept of fulfilment to which Dr. Hebert virtually alludes when he speaks about 'lines of development' and 'clear continuity of theological principle' (p. 130). In this sense, Sn fulfils Sa when they can be shown to be joined by a line of development in such a way that Sn embodies the accomplishment of something proposed in Sa; or Sn embodies completely some principle only partially embodied in Sa. It is because of this continuity of development that Sn requires Sa for its interpretation (sense iii).

All this will tease (and perhaps exasperate) the practising parson.

McIntyre's thesis is that "history is meaningful occurrence, and more particularly occurrence the meaning of which is a construct out of certain categories, namely, Necessity, Providence, Incarnation, Freedom and Memory." (p. 13). Each category is then thoroughly explored and expounded. McIntyre's treatment is always suggestive and often illuminating. Nevertheless there are some difficult patches. It is not only the excessive use of philosophical terms. It is also the use of abstruse and artificial terminology. Is it either necessary or helpful to describe the Gospel as "an incommunicable?"

This is an important book on a major subject which provokes thought and breaks much new ground.

S. BARTON BABBAGE.

LUTHER'S WORKS, Vol. 22. Sermons on the Gospel of St. John, Chapters 1-4.

Ed. by Jaroslav Pelikan (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis) 1957; XI and 558 pp.; \$4.50.

This interpretation of John 1:1-4:10 is a reconstruction by J. Aurifaber, the eager and able collector of Luther's letters and table-talks and author of two volumes which were meant to supplement the earliest editions (Wittenberg and Jena) of Luther's works (Eisleben 1564/65) of sermons preached by the Reformer in 1537-40. Since it is based on reliable notes, taken by serious students independently, this reconstruction is generally accepted as a faithful rendering of what Luther said. "The hands may sometimes be the hands of Aurifaber; but the voice is the voice of Luther," as Prof. Pelikan remarks. The sermons were preached on Saturdays. Thus Luther was here free to use the method of homilies, explaining sentence after sentence—the division of the chapters into verses was at that time not yet made. It might perhaps have been better to put the numbers of our verses, as given in the subtitles, in brackets. The interpretation is incomplete because Luther left out the pericopes contained in these chapters (1:19-28, Last Sunday in Advent; 2:1-11, 2nd post Epiph.; 3:16-21, Monday in Whitsun-Week). For these texts the reader must turn to Luther's Gospel Sermons proper. The volume gives an excellent picture of Luther who as preacher had the great ability of every great theologian to put the profoundest truths of the Gospel into such a language as could be understood by the simplest layman. Special attention should be given to the explanation of the prologue with its christological problems and to what Luther has to say on the Lamb of God p. 159ff.

The translation by M. H. Bertram is on the whole excellent, especially when it comes to the rendering of difficult idiomatic and picturesque phrases. In some cases, however, and this applies to all modern translations of the theological texts of the 16th century, either experts in the field of "Early New High German" in that period of the formation of a new German language should be consulted, or the historical dictionaries. At least the "Fruehneuhochdeutsches Glossar" by A. Goetze (H. Lietzmann, *Kliene Texte*, No. 101) should be on the desk of every translator of Luther, Zwingli or the Anabaptists. Then it could not happen that the word "berichten" which means "to give the sacrament" is not understood and a conjecture is made to make the text understandable (p. 418, note 120). Even the old St. Louis Edition provides in such cases the correct information in the short glossaries contained in several volumes. A great problem is the use of the American Revised Standard Version for the biblical text. This version has its merits, but it seems that its authors did not understand much of the *theology* of the New Testament. Besides it is liturgically impossible. One should have chosen the Revised King James Version to render the Bible quotations in Luther's sermons. One of the great shortcomings in the R.S.V. is the loss of the distinction between "thou" and "you." Thus the transition from "sy" to "hymeis" in the discourses of Jesus which is so significant can no longer be expressed. As we may expect that this edition of Luther's Works will survive the present R.S.V., it is to be regretted that the translators did not follow at least the example of Ronald Knox's translation in keeping this important differentiation. A comparison of John 3 and 4 in R.S.V. and the version of Knox shows what here is at stake.

In the interest of the future volumes a word must be said about the footnotes. Some of them are meant for scholars, as e.g. references to passages in the W.A., in the Aquinas' *Summa th.* or in the Fathers. Others are necessary in the interest of the average reader. Thus the false conception of the Gentiles who worshiped the God of the Jews (p. 251) would need an explanatory note in view of what Luther in other passages says correctly about the proselytes (p. 97). Without such clarification the modern reader gets a wrong picture. If historical information is given to explain Luther's necessarily wrong or incomplete views of Church history (he had to reply on the *Historia Tripartita*), it should be reliable. Unfortunately this is not always the case. The note on p. 67 on the ancient heretics, obviously based on obsolete textbooks, is untenable. It seems to confirm the erroneous assumption that Novatus was the author of Novatianism. Note 83, p. 110, confirms Luther's error that Apollinaris taught that the Logos assumed a human body only, but not a human soul (as Arius thought). The difference between "psyche" and "nous" should have been made clear by referring to the anthropology of St. Paul. Page 327 seems to suggest to the uninformed reader that Augustine held traducianist views over against Pelagius' creationism. In actual fact Augustine had never been able to decide whether traducianism or creationism is right, as he himself confessed. As to the doctrine of concomitance p. 266, note 44, it should not have been forgotten that it was already defined by the Council of Constance, even if the word "concomitantia" is not used. It is this Council which Luther attacks, as he had done so forcefully already in 1535. However, not the doctrine of concomitance is for him the real issue, but rather the arbitrary law which withholds the cup from the laity. It took a long time for Luther to see that the *communio sub una* was contrary to Christ's institution (it should not be forgotten that the daily communion of the early Christians was a communion under the species of bread only, as also the communion



which still in the Middle Ages the infant received after baptism when it was given a drop of consecrated wine), and still in the Smalcald Articles of 1537 he leaves open a remote possibility that we receive under one species as much as under both. Also in his writing against the Council of Constance the question of concomitance is only a sideline.

We have mentioned these shortcomings not to disparage the great work that lies behind this volume and the great service which its editor and its translator have rendered to English speaking Christendom. We want only to encourage the men who are in charge of this monumental work to think of means and ways how the edition can be brought to that level of scholarship which must be expected, even if this should mean a slower process of production.

H. SASSE.

#### PAUL BEFORE THE AREOPAGUS and other New Testament Studies.

By N. B. Stonehouse (Tyndale Press, London), 1957, pp. v, 197, 15/-.

Studies that have been out of print or not easily accessible are here gathered in a worthwhile collection, in which the chief accent falls on exposition, though historical and critical questions are not neglected.

A detailed study of Paul's Areopagus address, since it is largely exegetical and deals most comprehensively with the New Testament message, is given first place. It includes careful examination and refutation of the view of Schweitzer, Dibelius and others that the speech is unhistorical and of the judgment popularised by W. M. Ramsay that Paul was disappointed by his experiences at Athens and thereafter changed his evangelistic method. The conclusion is maintained that "the apostle Paul remains on solid Christian ground, in complete consistency with his teaching in his Epistles, and yet effectively takes advantage of the religious faith and practice of his pagan hearers in calling upon men to turn from idols to serve the living and true God." It is deserving of note that, in a recent extensive and important study of the speech, Bertil Gärtner affirms its Pauline character.

The second study is a competent review of Solomon Zeitlin's stimulating book, *Who Crucified Jesus?* Zeitlin's thesis is that the Jewish religious Sanhedrin and the Jewish people had nothing to do with the trial of Jesus. The Crucifixion must be laid to the charge of a political Sanhedrin led by a Quisling high priest seeking to ingratiate himself with Rome. There is much of value in Zeitlin's book, which has now run to three editions, but Professor Stonehouse weighs point by point the evidence for this special political court and shows that it lacks substantiation.

The third study is based on Acts 2:38, and deals with Repentance, Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Sound exposition is accompanied by many wise observations that provide a salutary corrective of some of the extravagances with which these themes are frequently burdened.

There are important studies of Bultmann and Dibelius which, in view of the impact made by these writers on New Testament scholarship, are probably now more valuable and necessary than when first written. It is over thirty years since Bultmann's *Jesus* appeared, and over twenty years since it was available in an English translation. Its continuing significance is that it presents Bultmann's basic conception of Jesus and so provides the essential background for an understanding of much of his later work. The two studies

contain sober and incisive criticism of both writers. Bultmann's historical scepticism is considered and his extreme vulnerability on many points is indicated. "Form-criticism" is also set in truer perspective and is shown for much less than the "wonder child" it first seemed to be.

There are also an essay on The Elders and the Living-Beings in the Apocalypse, emphasising the interdependence of adequate textual criticism and sound exegesis, and a short paper on Luther and the New Testament Canon.

C. S. PETRIE.

**THEOLOGIE DES ALTEN TESTAMENTS: Band I: Die Theologie der geschichtlichen Ueberlieferungen Israels.**

By Gerhard von Rad (Chr. Kaiser Verlag Muenchen), 1957, pp. 473; DM 21 (paper covers) or DM 24 (linen bound).

Gerhard von Rad is one of the great Old Testament exegetes of our time. His volumes on Genesis in the series *Das Alte Testament Deutsch* are outstanding examples of what commentaries should be. His Studies in Deuteronomy have been well received in English translation. It is with great interest, then, that we take up this, his first volume on Old Testament Theology. And indeed, if the succeeding volume turns out to be as valuable as this one, here we shall have a landmark in the interpretation of the Old Testament. The sub-title explains his method. It runs: "The Theology of the various historical traditions of Israel." Von Rad thus takes seriously the assured results of Pentateuchal criticism, in fact, he has little to say on the Scandinavian school of oral tradition. He accepts the fact that the Word has come down to us along many channels, and that the theological interpretation of what God has done for Israel is made from many points of view. But God keeps on revealing Himself to Israel in historical situation after historical situation. Accordingly, each generation of interpreters has in its turn to build upon the recorded interpretations of those who have experienced God's workings already in their day.

Von Rad establishes in his first hundred pages the extent to which we can be sure of the historicity of that which is both the subject and the object or revelation. This is essential, since the faith of Israel is founded on historical event. Supposing that it is impossible for the critical historian to accept the claim that all Israel was present at Sinai, can we in our turn accept Israel's own theological interpretation of what happened there? If much of Israel's faith is expressed in the form of confessions or credos, then surely we must see historical event in the light of the faith that interprets it. Von Rad discusses the significance of Creation, of the Fall, and of God's choice of Israel as His People on the basis of the findings he reaches in the first part of the book. Thereafter he examines separately the views of the Deuteronomist, the Priestly writers, the Psalmists, the Chronicler, the Wisdom writers, etc., showing how each has learned from those who went before. The whole is a mighty compendium of Old Testament interpretation.

It is out of place to criticise adversely any book which is not complete, and we now await the second volume. On p. 133 of this first volume, von Rad promises to deal therein with Israel's response to Yahweh's Revelation. Perhaps there will appear in the second volume what is so conspicuously lacking in this first volume, viz., a discussion of the significance of Israel as a whole, as the People of God, and of God's purposes for His world in His choice of Israel as His instrument.

Many points of detail are dealt with in short excursus. Key Hebrew words and expressions are expounded lucidly and in detail, though the reader who does not know Hebrew need not be afraid to tackle this work. The Hebrew is always translated into German. Moreover, von Rad's German is always clear and easy for us "foreigners" to read. Never once did I find a "Barthian" or a "Pauline" sentence to hold up my understanding of his thought.

G. A. F. KNIGHT.

#### SPIRITUAL AND ANABAPTIST WRITERS.

Documents illustrative of the Radical Reformation, ed. by George H. Williams, and Evangelical Catholicism as represented by Juan de Valdes, ed. by Angel M. Mergal. The library of Christian Classics, Vol. xxv (S.C.M. Press, London), 1957, pp. 421; 35/-.

America, the sanctuary of all dissenters of the Old World, has more and more become the center of intensive studies in the "Left Wing" (R. Bainton) or "Radical Reformation," as Prof. Williams calls the movements of the "Anabaptists," "Spirituals" and "Evangelical Rationalists" of the 16th century. This is primarily due to the endeavours of churches like the Mennonites and the Schwenckfelders to preserve the heritage of their fathers, the greatest achievement in this respect being the monumental "Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum." A surprisingly large number of primary sources in English translation are listed in the important bibliography pp. 285-93. These studies have grown beyond denominational boundaries into a comprehensive investigation of that "Fourth" Reformation (beside the Lutheran, Calvinist and Anglican Reformations) which has helped to shape American religion and culture. Prof. Williams of Harvard is one of the outstanding scholars in this important field of theological and historical research. In the present volume he presents, with informative introductions into the whole work and the individual documents, well chosen selections from Swiss, German and Dutch Anabaptists (Blaurock, Grebel, Hubmaier, Denck, Stadler, M. Hofman, Obbe and Dietrich Philips, Menno Simons) and Spiritualists (Müntzer, Franck, Schwenckfeld). The spirit of the early Anabaptists is shown by the most touching human document of this movement, the "Trial and Martyrdom of Michael Sattler," the author of the Seven Theses of Schlatt (i.e. Schlatten in Baden, not Schleithem!), 1527. If anywhere the restriction put on the editor by lack of space is to be regretted, then it is here where Sattler's letter with the theses should have been inserted. Of great importance for the historian are Obbe Philips' recollections of the fateful years 1533-36 (pp. 182ff.). The main purpose in selecting the material was to give an insight into the theological thought of these men. It is impossible to give an account of the various theological topics concerned. They cover all issues of the Reformation and are easily accessible through the topical and analytical index. It is interesting to meet as theologians some men who otherwise are only known from their lives and their fate. One has the impression that the theological tradition plays a greater role in their thinking than might be expected from revolutionary minds. The connection with the Middle Ages, so conspicuous in Holland and Moravia, needs further investigation, and by no means only with regard to the medieval sects. The allegorical use of Lev. 11:3 which Williams finds "widely employed in Anabaptist exegesis" (p. 134, n. 14) goes back via the schoolmen and the Fathers to the pre-Christian synagogue. Also the influence of Augustine is conspicuous. Most of



the German texts have been translated by the editor, on the whole a marvellous work in view of the difficulties of the Early High German. In some cases he has read too much into the text, e.g. p. 150 where "der einige Geist" is translated "the unitary Spirit" instead of "the only Spirit" and the question is asked whether this might be "in contrast with the septiform Spirit of sacramental theology."

Professor Williams' excellent presentation of Northern representatives of the "Radical Reformation" is supplemented by some selections from Juan de Valdes from Spain (about 1500-41). Prof. Mergal of Puerto Rico has looked after this second part (pp. 297-394) which contains three selections with introductions and bibliography. It gives an insight into a type of evangelical piety in which evangelical biblicism, humanist clarity and Spanish mysticism form a wonderful harmony. It is regrettable that space did not allow the insertion of some passages on Valdes' view of the sacraments. The passage on Law and Gospel p. 366 sounds remarkably Lutheran.

The volume as a whole is an outstanding contribution to the "Library" and will serve as a means to provoke self-examination on all sides. Why did the 16th century produce five Reformations instead of one—for also the Roman Church was after Trent no longer what it had been in 1517? Why had Luther, why had Zwingli and Calvin to reject the Anabaptists? Why was the "Radical Reformation" bound to disintegrate from the beginning? Was it a "Reformation?"

H. SASSE.

#### SHORTER NOTICES.

*The State in the New Testament*, by Oscar Cullmann (S.C.M., 12/6). Valuable as Professor Cullmann's writings are, their apparent freshness has often to be discounted because of questionable exegesis. This small volume is no exception. The State is held to be a temporary institution, not divine yet willed by God. The Christian must obey the State so far as it remains within its bounds; but he must remain critical towards it, and, if ever it demands what belongs to God, resist it. In elucidating these principles, there are many acute observations, and the discussion of Jesus' condemnation by the Roman State is excellent. But were the Zealots so ubiquitous as they are here represented? The conscription of "Sicarii," "Galileans," "Iscariot," "Bar Jona" and the "Sons of Thunder" into the Zealot ranks savours of a press-gang resoluteness. Professor Cullmann reiterates his contentions regarding the "powers" (*exousiai*) of Romans 13, and in a lengthy Excursus addresses himself to recent criticism. There are Indexes of authors and of Biblical passages.

*The Letter to the Hebrews*, by Johannes Schneider (Eerdmans, \$2.50). The author is New Testament Professor and Dean of the Theological Faculty of Berlin University, the only Baptist in an Evangelical-Lutheran divinity school. His commentary is intended for practical use by men and women of today, and with his scholarly equipment he presents an untechnical exposition. Acknowledging that Hebrews is not easily accessible to modern readers, he holds that nevertheless behind it stand the deepest questions of mankind, to which it explains that there is but one answer, that which God has given in Christ. Knowing the dangers that threaten God's people on this earth, and admonishing them to maintain their loyalty to Christ, it thereby renders today a great pastoral service.

*A Commentary on Mark Thirteen*, by G. R. Beasley Murray (Macmillan, 29/9 Aust.). In 1954 Dr. Beasley-Murray published *Jesus and the Future*, a work devoted to the criticism and theology of Mark 13.

Now, as the outcome of a suggestion by senior colleagues, he provides an exposition of that difficult chapter based on the research embodied in his earlier book. Of the critical issues raised and the findings reached earlier he first gives a brief summary, and then a detailed commentary on the Greek text follows. Dr. Beasley-Murray believes that the contents of the discourse have high claim to authority, and that, while it was given for a specific purpose, it contains theological pre-suppositions of far-reaching significance. His exposition is valuable and full of interest. There is a long and important note on the history of the interpretation of "the Appalling Abomination" of verse 14.

C. S. Petrie.

*Interpreting Revelation*, by Merrill C. Tenney (Eerdmans, \$3.50). Over fifty years ago Professor James Orr stated in his *Progress of Dogma* that "there has never been an epoch of eschatology as for other doctrines." Perhaps the present may be so classed. For, after the optimistic humanism of the past generation matched by a fantastic dispensationalism, more realistic and Biblical judgments occupy the field. This is evidenced by this recent book on Revelation by the Dean of the Graduate School of Wheaton College. While the author acknowledges that he writes from "a premillenarian and moderate futurist standpoint," he is fair to other viewpoints, which he states objectively. He rightly distinguishes between the views of those who believe in the authority of Scripture and therefore in the objectivity of the Second Coming, and those who spiritualise and explain away all predictive prophecy. Only a quarter of the book is devoted to exegesis of the text, but other chapters make a valuable contribution to the understanding of the whole subject.

W. R. McEwen.

*The Vatican Revolution*, by Geddes MacGregor (Macmillan, 34/9 Aust.). The central thesis of this book is that the triumph of the papalist tradition at the Vatican Council in 1870 over conciliarism, which had an enormous prestige in the Middle Ages, constituted, in Maret's phrase "a radical and essential revolution." The contention that the strong opposition to the Infallibility Decree was based on its inexpediency is critically dismissed as "the Inopportunist Legend" which in its development embodies the psychological projection of the mental disquietude and spiritual fears of the majority in the Council. In addition to an interesting and colorful account of the background and proceedings of the Council, there are valuable discussions on the meaning of "infallibility" and "ex cathedra." The text of the Decrees (with Manning's translation) and an extensive bibliography representing the diverse viewpoints are useful addenda.

*In Search of Reality*, by Viscount Samuel (Blackwell, Oxford; 47/3 Aust.). Amidst contemporary uncertainties, the distinguished author, with his idealistic approach, pursues his quest for reality in the spheres of philosophy, science and religion, arriving at the general conclusion that the focal point is the individual human person in whom alone evolution becomes self-conscious. "Civilization is Conscious Evolution" (168). The adoption of evolution ("from what and into what we have no conception," 137), as a substitute for fiat creation and the advocacy of fellowship and co-operation between all organized religions (on the ground that theology divides but ethics unites) indicates a widely different viewpoint both from traditional Judaism and Christianity. However, the volume, designed for the ordinary reader (with scientific technicalities reserved for a lengthy appendix) is of considerable value in its analysis of contemporary ideas and (despite its anthropocentrism) for its vigorous personalism in contrast to the personified abstractions of contemporary collectivism.

*The Christian Year*, by Edward T. Horn (Muhlenberg, Philadelphia, \$3.75). The greater part of this work, following a lucid chapter on the evolution of the Christian Year, embodies a detailed account of the framework of the Western liturgical tradition. The writer indicates the similarity of the Lutheran and Anglican orders, not only in generally limiting their calendars to the commemoration of Scriptural events and persons, but more specifically as in their series of propers exhibiting "a common tradition derived from the Northern European and English pre-Reformation missals" (160) as distinct from the Roman. Further, an historical interaction is evident between these two liturgical traditions in that whilst the Lutheran Reformation through Cranmer with his German associations profoundly influenced the First Prayerbook of Edward VI, American Lutheranism more recently owes much to the classic English of the Prayer Book. This volume makes an elucidating contribution to this field of liturgical study.

*The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul*, Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Paper, No. 6, by Neill Q. Hamilton (Oliver and Boyd, 8/6). The general theme of this brochure is that Paul conceived of the Holy Spirit in Christological-eschatological terms since "on the basis of the work of Christ the power of the redeemed future has been released to act in the present in the person of the Holy Spirit" (26). The Christian life thus produced through this relationship of the future to the present is characterised by a unique tension. The writer develops his position over against Schweitzer's consistent, Dodd's realized and Bultmann's reinterpreted eschatology. Since this is the first study that has appeared dealing directly with the subject since Dr. Gerhardus Vos of Princeton wrote in 1910, the careful treatment embodied in this Basel doctoral thesis meets a real contemporary need.

*Inspiration and Interpretation*, edited by J. F. Walvoord (Eerdmans, \$4.50). This symposium by various members of the Evangelical Theological Society in the U.S.A., written from a conservative point of view, follows an historical approach to its subject with nine studies, commencing with the thought of Irenaeus and terminating with Reinhold Niebuhr. The final study by Carl F. H. Henry clearly sets out, in contrast to other contemporary views, the traditional orthodox position "that the Scriptures are no mere appendage to special redemptive history, but an essential and climatic phase of it" (264). This volume constitutes an important addition to the literature on the nature of Scripture which is pivotal in theological discussion of the present day.

*Abraham to the Middle East Crisis*, by G. Fredercik Owen (Eerdmans, \$5.95). A revised and enlarged edition of a former popular work, *Abraham to Allenby*, this book traces the history of Palestine from the Biblical era through the intervening period (particularly that of the Crusades and the Moslem occupation) to the present partition of the land. Based upon a wide knowledge of the subject, the author, with a manifest admiration for modern Israel, writes in a vivid and interesting manner illustrating his fascinating theme with apt illustrations. This excellently produced book is to be read with both pleasure and profit. A few misprints occur; e.g. "Samuels" three times on p. 301 for the British High Commissioner and a number of misplaced dates occur in pp. 172-81.

*Archaeology and the Old Testament*, by J. A. Thompson and *Out of the Earth*, by E. M. Blaiklock (Eerdmans, \$1.50 each). The first of these new "Pathway Books," by the Lecturer in Old Testament Studies



at the Baptist College, Sydney, traces the bearing of archaeological research in providing a background, supplement, elucidation and confirmation to Old Testament History. Mr. Thompson, who writes with lucidity out of a wide yet intimate knowledge of his subject, has compressed much relevant information into this useful little book which covers pre-exilic times. A further work on the post-exilic period is anticipated. Professor Blaiklock of Auckland University considers the witness of archaeology to the New Testament. Here the field is necessarily more restricted, the evidence being largely from papyri. Whilst in parts the book leans heavily on the work of Ramsay, the material is presented in an interesting and arresting manner.

*The Ministry of the Word*, by R. E. C. Brown and *What is Liturgical Preaching?* by Reginald H. Fuller (S.C.M., 8/6 and 6/-). The main thesis of the first book is that since the mode of revelation is a person rather than a set of propositions, the mode of preaching depends on a mastery of poetry rather than of prose. Upon this questionable antithesis, the author, with a particular fondness for T. S. Eliot, develops an analogy between the poet and the preacher and arrives at the provocative conclusion that "to preserve an essential untidiness of mind and to talk ambiguously with unswerving confidence, loving the truth more than the results of speaking it—that is a description that can be made of a faithful minister of the Word" (65). In the second volume, Dr. Fuller, holding with Cullmann that in the Primitive Church the service of the Word was an integral part of the eucharistic celebration, maintains that "unless the eucharist is preceded by the ministry of the Word the liturgy become a Pelagian affair, a work of man, a purely human offering" (21). Writing within the Anglican tradition, Dr. Fuller, whilst agreeing with Hooker that the reading of Scripture may be a real proclamation of the Word, nevertheless holds that "everything possible should be done to secure obedience" (50) at the principal Sunday service to the Prayer Book rubric requiring a sermon to be preached at every celebration of the Lord's Supper. (He does not discuss the further question of the practicality of a continuously weekly eucharistic sermon, the preparational difficulty of which doubtless partly accounts for the dissuetude of the rubric). This emphasis on the proclamation, it is asserted, is necessary "for the purpose of the sermon is to extract from the scripture readings the essential core and content of the Gospel . . . in order that the central act can be made the material for recital in the prayer of thanksgiving" (22). Dr. Fuller, in developing his main thesis in this excellent book, makes some pertinent observations concerning preaching in general. Thus, commenting on the influx of the modern cult of the relevant, he adds: "Our starting point must be, not the people's needs but the gospel in its fulness . . . Penultimate needs will otherwise lead to penultimate comforts. The comfort of the Gospel is available only on the other side of judgement" (17). Both these brochures are early numbers in the new and promising series, "Studies in Ministry and Worship" edited by Dr. G. W. H. Lampe, of Birmingham.

*A Sacramental Catechism*, by Andrew Thomson (Westminster Fellowship, The Manse, Middelmarck, Otago, N.Z., 1/-). Rich in Scriptural allusion and framed in its central section on the Westminster Shorter Catechism's statement concerning "the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper," this once widely used communicants' manual by the noted evangelical leader in the Church of Scotland, here republished on the occasion of its triple jubilee, provides a valuable preparation for the Sacrament.

R. Swanton.

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